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U.S. POLICY TOWARD RWANDA

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② Background

Rwanda, a poor country comprised primarily of subsistence farmers, has had a history of ethnic discord between majority Hutus and minority Tutsis. Prior to independence from Belgium in 1962, the Hutu majority overthrew the traditional Tutsi monarchy, causing large-scale outflows of Tutsi refugees. Tutsi refugees subsequently formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and invaded Rwanda from Uganda in 1990, sparking a civil war. In August 1993, the Rwandan government and the RPF signed the Arusha peace accord, which provided for a broad-based government, integration of the two armed forces, and a transition to democratic elections.

The death of President Juvenal Habyarimana in a suspicious April 6, 1994 plane crash sparked unprecedented ethnic and political violence. Hutu extremist militias and Rwandan military began massacring Tutsis and moderate Hutus, and the RPF launched an offensive, renewing the civil war. By July, the RPF had defeated the interim government, and a new, RPF-led coalition government was established. The three months of massacres and fighting resulted in an estimated 500,000 deaths, over two million new refugees, and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced. Intimidation by exiled Hutu extremist leaders and their defeated military, and concerns about insecurity within Rwanda, have inhibited refugee repatriation.

U.S. Interests

We have a strong humanitarian interest in preventing renewed ethnic conflict, genocide, and mass movements of refugees which affect the political stability and economic prosperity of the region. The international community mounted an enormous humanitarian relief effort to respond to the unprecedented outflow of refugees. The United States provided over \$270 million in direct humanitarian assistance in 1994. In addition, the U.S. military deployed about 2,300 troops to the region during the height of the crisis to expedite the relief effort, completing their mission on September 30. The United States has a strong interest in investing in preventive diplomacy efforts to help Rwanda avoid renewed warfare which could plunge the region into another humanitarian disaster causing great human suffering and requiring another massive infusion of resources from the international community.

U.S. Policy Objectives

Facilitate Refugee Return and National Reconciliation:

Our relations and assistance to Rwanda depend on serious efforts by the new Rwandan Government to create conditions that will promote refugee return, internal recovery, and national reconciliation. To assist those efforts, we are providing \$9 million to help restore government services and help rebuild

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the justice system, and \$2.5 million to help pay off Rwanda's arrears to the World Bank, which will allow the Bank to make available an emergency credit of \$50 million and up to \$250 million in project assistance.

Maintain Stability and Build Confidence: The U.S. provided logistical support to expedite deployment to Rwanda of an expanded contingent of over 5,500 UN peacekeepers and provided \$750,000 for UN human rights monitors in Rwanda. About 60 were in country at the end of 1994, with a total of 147 planned.

Ensure Accountability for the Genocide: The U.S. co-sponsored the UN Security Council Resolution which authorizes a Rwanda War Crimes Tribunal and has sent teams to assist the investigation. We intend to contribute at least \$1 million for the Tribunal, as well as providing personnel.

Promote Respect for Human Rights: We have told Rwandan government leaders of our concerns over the reports of revenge killings. The Government has stated that reprisals are against its policy and that it will cooperate with UN authorities to investigate any incidents.

Enhance Security in Refugee Camps: Host countries have principal responsibility for assuring security, and the international community is working to assist the neighboring states in carrying out this responsibility.

Coordinate and Mobilize the International Community: The United States established a "Friends of Rwanda" operational support group, composed of 11 key countries, the UN, the Organization of African Unity, and European Union, to coordinate and push efforts on refugee repatriation and camp security, the International Tribunal, human rights monitors, aid for rehabilitation, and other issues.

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